

233 South Wacker Drive Suite 800, Sears Tower Chicago, IL 60606

312-454-0400 (voice) 312-454-0411 (fax) www.chicagoareaplanning.org

To: CMAP Working Committees

Date: June 11, 2007

From: Bob Dean, Associate Regional Planner

Re: Preparation of Regional Snapshot Report Series

The development of the Regional Comprehensive Plan will involve the preparation of a series of reports called regional snapshots. These reports are meant to dig deeper into the subjects touched upon in the original Regional Snapshot document, which is online at: http://chicagoareaplanning.org/snapshot/.

The six CMAP working committees will take an active role in the scoping and preparation of the regional snapshot report series. These reports will focus on the following:

- Address important, complex issues that should be considered in the Regional
 Comprehensive Plan. This will allow new ideas and approaches to be considered
 through the committee process before the Regional Comprehensive Plan is developed.
 It also will increase the ability of staff to understand, analyze, and communicate these
 complex issues.
- Identify linkages between the issue areas (economic and community development, environment and natural resources, housing, human services, land use, transportation) addressed by CMAP's six working committees.
- Increase awareness of CMAP and its mission.

Two snapshots are currently underway, one covering sustainability and one covering jobshousing balance. Other snapshot reports expected to be undertaken in the near future will cover demographic change, infill development, and industry clusters.

Attached to this memo is a description of the initial findings of the first snapshot report, which is on sustainability. Staff will provide a presentation on the sustainability snapshot report at the next meeting of each working committee. At the meeting, committee members will be asked to discuss and comment on three elements of the presentation: the definition of sustainability; the initial research findings concerning topics that the Regional Comprehensive Plan should address; and the use of indicators to measure sustainability.



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Major Elements of the Draft Snapshot Report on Sustainability May 29, 2007

The Snapshot Report on sustainability will focus on conceptualizing sustainability and developing potential applications to CMAP's planning and programming activities. Preliminary research suggests that there are common elements that appear repeatedly in discussions of sustainability: seeking to achieve economic, environmental, and social or equity goals simultaneously; a concern for future generations; achieving social well being or meeting needs; and maintaining a non-decreasing level of social and environmental goods. These should be core concepts in the CMAP application, but some clarification is needed to determine whether adoption of these as guiding precepts would be significantly new or different from the goals and techniques of the 2040 Regional Framework Plan, 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, or "good planning" in general.

In operationalizing sustainability, the concept is being broken down for clarity of presentation into dimensions and elements, as shown in the list below. Some of the elements overlap dimensions, but they seem to capture the range of issues related to sustainability. It is proposed that these elements be considered within each of the CMAP program areas to develop potential strategies for addressing them. Research is being conducted to identify strategies other MPOs and regional councils are using to meet sustainability goals, and a synopsis of the findings will be presented in the Snapshot Report.

Dimension	Elements
Time	 Intergenerational equity
	 Conditions expected beyond 2040 planning horizon
Scale	 Externalities imposed outside Chicago region
	 Regional benefits and regional costs
	 Global economic integration and local economies
Risk/irreversibility	 Dramatic changes in future conditions
	 Natural resource limitations (resource use and waste assimilation)
Adaptability	 Ability of governance structures to respond adequately to future
	threats
Connectivity	 Relationship between natural and social systems
Value	 Holistic accounting of economic goods
	 Distributional equity

It is also possible to identify a number of cross-cutting issues whose relevance to sustainability is immediately apparent. In dealing with issues under risk and irreversibility, CMAP must clearly address the possibility and magnitude of climate change, most likely using the common rubric of *adaptation* and *mitigation* strategies. For the former, analysis would focus on ways of limiting damage from climate change (e.g., improved coping mechanisms for drought and flooding); the latter concentrates on ways of slowing or reducing climate change (e.g., reducing carbon emissions). Secondly, resource consumption and renewability must be addressed, most importantly dependence on fossil fuels. Thirdly, the capacity

of local government structures, and the mobilization of communities and citizens, to respond to future threats is a question of preparation in the face of uncertainty. The Snapshot Report will investigate education and training strategies for assisting local government units in their response to potential future threats. The Snapshot Report is expected to recommend that the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) address these three issues directly.

Finally, one element of conceptualizing sustainability is determining how to measure it. To that end, the Snapshot Report is to develop a list of potential indicators for tracking progress toward sustainability goals and, for the RCP, measuring the sustainability of alternative scenarios.